

# THE MIDWEST ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

## 09 11.11.2011

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### ABANDONED PROJECT TO BE REBORN AS ARTIST HOUSING

# CHA'S NEW WAY

While much of Chicago's large-scale public housing has been demolished, a small, abandoned 36-unit Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) property on the South Side is being reborn as an innovative mixed-income project with public, affordable, and market-rate housing as well as a cultural center for residents.

The project is a collaboration between artist-planner Theaster Gates, Landon Bone Baker Architects (LBBA), and Brinshore Development, working in **continued on page 6**



### MINNEAPOLIS PLAZA REDESIGN WOULD ALTER FRIEDBERG PROJECT

# PARSING PEAVEY

With its sunken plaza and dramatic concrete waterfalls, Peavey Plaza in Minneapolis, designed by M. Paul Friedberg and completed in 1973, is a notable modern landscape that has fallen into disrepair. Located adjacent to the Minneapolis Orchestra Hall and the Nicollet Mall, which was designed by Lawrence Halprin, the **continued on page 6**



### CHICAGO GAINS OPEN SPACE, BUT LESS THAN THOUGHT

# STUNTED GROWTH

Chicago has added more than 500 acres of publicly accessible open space since 1998, boosting total acreage to just more than 12,000, a new city inventory calculates.

The data hints at both some of the open space successes realized during former Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's tenure, and the **continued on page 3**

**HEAD OF THE GLASS:**  
THE PROMISE AND PERILS OF LEADING EDGE GLASS TECHNOLOGY. SEE PAGES 9-11. PLUS A SPECIAL SECTION ON DOORS AND SLIDERS. SEE PAGES 13-21

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### PASSENGER IMPROVEMENTS TO HISTORIC TRAIN STATION

# Clearing the Crust

The Wilson Red Line station on North Broadway in Uptown is not exactly the Chicago Transit Authority's best. Margo O'Hara, a neighborhood resident who

advocates for better transportation options in the neighborhood, says the empty storefronts surrounding the station make it uninviting. It was voted for the third year in a row to receive the *Red Eye* "Crust Station" award because of "graffiti, vacant storefronts, safety concerns, and lack of elevator."

At least one of these things will change in an upcoming renovation project to improve accessibility and the environment for people who transfer to and from four bus routes. An elevator will be added, making it the only accessible CTA station of the three Red Line stations in Uptown.

The current Wilson station was originally built in 1923, although the earliest station at the intersection of Wilson Avenue and Broadway opened in 1900, according to Chicago-L.org, a website edited by Graham Garfield, a CTA employee and interurban railway historian. Arthur Gerber, who also designed other stations **continued on page 4**



HENNING LARSEN & OLAFUR ELIASSON'S GLASSY CONCERT HALL. **SEE PAGE 9**

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## THE PLEASURE AND POWER OF RUINS

There is a new argument in the debate over so-called “ruin porn.” As countless photographers have descended on Detroit over the last decade to document its crumbling structures and spiraling urban decline, a backlash—fueled largely by native or longtime Detroit residents—has flared, accusing the photographers and the viewers who consume their stirring images of exploiting the city’s plight and fetishizing its destruction. I’ve never entirely bought that argument, but I’ve tried to take heed of the criticism in these pages either by contextualizing the images or by trying to show previously unseen places, like the floating ruin of the S.S. Columbia on our Comment page in this issue.

Michigan Central Depot, the city’s mammoth Beaux-Arts train station, has long been the must-see site for destruction, with documentarians making it recognizable around the world. At press time, the *Detroit News* reported that the billionaire Maroun family, which owns the station, has been cleaning it up and is working with the New York-based developer Scott Griffin on a feasibility study to reuse the structure in some way. Buried in the *News* piece was the fact that Griffin first learned of the depot through photography, and then approached the Marouns about a partnering on the redevelopment. While it’s far too soon to declare the building saved, it’s a positive example of the power of images to capture the imagination of the public and inspire action (Joel Sternfeld’s portraits of the High Line served a similar function in New York). Many Detroiters are skeptical of the Marouns, who have a checkered past with various infrastructure and planning projects, but to borrow a phrase from street protesters, “the whole world is watching.”

A rebirth of the station would be the most visible sign that the Motor City, while down, is not entirely out, at least not yet. I’ll be following the outcome of the feasibility study closely. Whatever course it takes, I hope the station’s complex history is treated sensitively. Its brutal patina is magnetic, and I would hate to see it overly sanitized.

There are countless signs of stirrings in Detroit (as indicated by a new, very active Curbed site edited by a longtime *AN* contributor). Recent national home sales figures placed the city in the top four strongest markets in the country, a sign that the city’s bargain basement prices are beginning to attract buyers.

The photographers, professional and amateur alike, deserve a lot of credit for moving the city’s plight from the margins to the center of the national imagination. Architects, planners, and designers have played a role as well. If projects like Michigan Central proceed, their role will be crucial in supplying solutions and visionary thinking. Here’s a free idea. Building on the world’s fascination with the city, a portion of the vast station could be given over to a small museum or kunsthalle dedicated to the future of urbanism. And some of the abandoned office tower could become a hostel targeted at urban explorers. Detroit could become a center of urban reinvention rather than a textbook example of failure. **ALAN G. BRAKE**

## BILLINGS DIP OVERALL BUT MIDWEST STILL POSITIVE

# Pain and Gains

After a fleeting moment of numbers above 50, the AIA Billings Index dropped from a much-needed high of 51.4 in August to a sobering 46.9 in September. Any ABI number below 50 is considered negative. A mix of good and bad regional news left the country statistically divided as the Northeast and Midwest poked up above 50 at 50.8 and 51.0 respectively, while the South and the West sunk to 47.3 and 46.7. In a statement AIA chief economist Kermit Baker called the blip an “aberration” and pointed to a skittish economy that hadn’t gained enough traction to sustain growth.

“It was a little surprising to see the August number kick up,” Baker said in a telephone interview. “It’s ironic that it happened in a month where the original jobs reading had zero growth, that’s why were weren’t convinced it could be sustained.”

Baker said that the Northeast and the Midwest were generally not overbuilt, so the rebound there was not too surprising. He added that regional diversity should temper concerns for the South, where Texas performs well while Florida lags, or in the West where San Diego hurts while San Francisco stays relatively strong.

Zurich Esposito, executive vice president of AIA Chicago, concurred. “There’s definitely variation here too,” he said. “The Chicago market is very strong, but it doesn’t mean that everyone is doing well.” Still, he added that the positive numbers were a welcome relief from a summertime low of 44 which remains fresh in the mind at many Midwestern firms. “It certainly has an effect psychology,” he said. He pointed to the rental market and institutional projects such as hospitals and universities as strong sectors.

Nationally the sector breakdown saw mixed practices go from 50.9 to 50.0, commercial/industrial went up from 46.0 to 52.4, institutional shifted from 48.5 to 48.0, and multi-family residential swung to 46.4 from 44.8. Project inquiries remained in positive territory at 54.3 from 56.9. **TOM STOELKER**

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**STUNTED GROWTH** continued from front page  
unresolved issues the city faces on this front. The Daley years saw places like Millennium Park, full of artistic eye candy, and new frontage along the Chicago River make their debut. But places to gather and play still

### A new park in Logan Square.

remain limited in a number of densely settled neighborhoods far from downtown and the lakefront.

A community like Brighton Park, on the Southwest Side, has just under 11 acres of open space, the inventory shows. A few miles to the east, along Lake Michigan, the Oakland area has 129 acres.

“We still have work to do. We’re a built up city, so it gets more challenging,” said Erma Tranter, president of Friends of the Parks, an advocacy organization.

The inventory includes everything from Chicago Park District land to green ribbons along the city’s boulevard system. The

park district accounts for the bulk of the city’s open spaces, offering more than 7,400 acres in all.

City planners used geographic information systems to scope Chicago’s 77 community areas for the inventory, resulting in what a spokesman said was more precise count than the 11,499 open space acres the 1998 CitySpace Plan found. Roadways and parking lots located inside of parks were counted as open space in that plan, a move that wasn’t repeated this time.

The new inventory is likely the first step in updating the CitySpace document, which a city spokesman said was “still very much a viable document in terms of priorities.” CitySpace set a goal of creating 90 to 100 acres

of open space per year.

Achieving such a pace won’t easy during an era defined by tight budgets. Tranter, from Friends of the Parks, wants public agencies to scour their inventories for land that could be banked for future parks. City planners, meanwhile, are looking for ways to make routes to existing open spaces more convenient and accessible.

A few large new open spaces are coming around the bend, however, including a 24-acre park slated for Little Village, another Southwest Side neighborhood. And earlier this year the city transferred 653 acres of land on Chicago’s Far South Side to the park district for the Calumet Open Space Reserve project.

**MICAH MAIDENBERG**





> **THE BEDFORD**  
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Designer: Gettys and  
Salita Development

COURTESY SALITA DEVELOPMENT

The Bedford restaurant, in Wicker Park, is a model for the creative reuse of a sometimes difficult building type: the bank. The restaurant's name originates from the Bedford limestone-clad, landmarked building in which it is located, which originally housed the Home Bank and Trust Company. Salita Development and the hospitality design firm Gettys drew upon this rich history of the building as a jumping off point for the design. "In many cases, these are materials that you wouldn't really be able to afford anymore, like marble and terrazzo," said Anne Smith, the lead designer from Salita. "We knew that it would be a shame to not find creative ways to incorporate these elements into the design." The large doors and partitions from the private banking booths were repurposed as bathroom stalls. Marble tiling and the original terrazzo floors were preserved, as well as many articles such as lock boxes, teller grills, and tables. Though the space occupies over 8,000 square feet, it appears relaxed and inviting. Three distinct areas, including the main bar, the parlor dining room, a private event space, and the main focal point, the vault, reborn as a cocktail lounge, subdivide the space. Additionally, wood elements in the bar area, three double-sided fireplaces, and two structural columns between the bar and the main dining room create warmth in contrast to the cooler elements of marble and terrazzo. Modern materials and light fixtures, introduce contemporary elements into the bank's historic spaces. **HANNAH NOVACK**

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## DO THE SHUFFLE

Eavesdrop was glad to hear that **Destefano Partners** is splitting into two firms, rather than closing entirely as was rumored. One firm will focus on international work, while the other will pursue domestic projects. Destafano currently employs about 25 designers, down from a peak of nearly 150. The domestic project-oriented firm, **Lothan Van Hook Destefano Architecture**, will employ 8 to 10 people. The other firm is, as yet, unnamed.

We're also hearing rumblings of a reorganization at **VOA Associates**, with chairman **Mike Toolis** taking a to-date undefined new role in order to avoid a conflict of interest in pursuing city work. Toolis is married to **Theresa Mintle**, **Mayor Emanuel's** new-ish chief of staff. VOA has been deft at adapting to the times. They took in **Lucien Lagrange** as a new principal for luxury residential and hospitality projects following the closure of his firm last year.

Our well-placed informant has said that **Teng & Associates** may be acquired. But who would be the buyer? The ever-expanding **AECOM**? Seems like a possibility given the range of Teng's work.

## OR STAY PUT

Job security is hard to find these days, especially in architecture. So we extend our sincerest congratulations to **Lee Malone**, **SOM** Chicago's receptionist, who is celebrating her 50<sup>th</sup> year on the job. And she's only 71! How's that for continuity?

## GROUPON AIN'T CHEAP

As we go to press Groupon's stock prices are surging on Wall Street, with the company's estimated worth tagged at \$19 billion. I guess founders **Brad Keywell** and **Eric Lefkofsky** can afford their share of the estimated \$40 million sale of the Wrigley Building, which is pretty good considering the fact that Groupon has yet to turn a profit. Mazel tov, boys! Just don't mess up Wrigley!

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MIDWESTEAVESDROP@ARCHPAPER.COM.**

**CLEARING THE CRUST** continued from front page in the CTA system, including stops in Wilmette and Evanston, designed the Classical Revival station.

"The design contained what were becoming Gerber trademarks, including laurel-framed cartouches, globed lights, and an overall majestic scale. The main entrance was on the corner of Wilson and Broadway and was topped with an ornate terra cotta arched parapet and a fascia over the door that read 'Uptown Station,'" according to the site. The parapet was removed by 1959, perhaps because of a renovation effort in 1958.

In addition to a new elevator, the CTA will make street modifications and rehabilitate the exterior. These include adding street-

level bus and train tracker screens, improved signage directing customers between bus stops and the station, and lighting changes. The CTA received \$6 million from the Federal Transit Administration's Bus Livability Program to rehabilitate the station. At press time, CTA had not selected an architect for this project. They also explained, via email, that state and federal law requires them to use to a "publicly advertised, qualifications-based process for contracting with architects and engineers for station design."

Informed about the project, Uptown resident O'Hara exclaimed, "Thank goodness. Wilson could be such a community nexus. You have Truman there, now a Target, the Jewel, and maybe some local stores one day." **STEVEN VANCE**

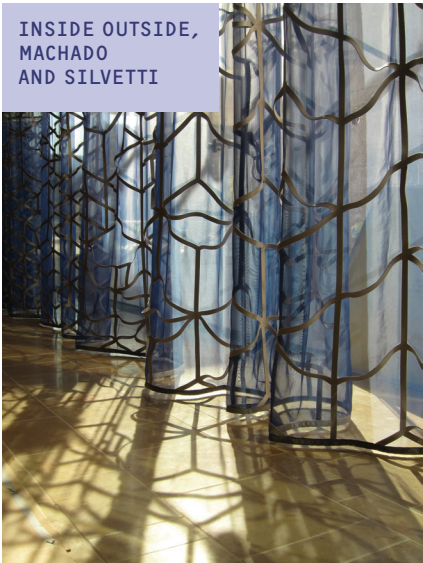
The Wilson Red Line stop today.



JEFF ZOLINE/Flickr



IN DETAIL > CHAZEN MUSEUM CURTAIN



INSIDE OUTSIDE,  
MACHADO  
AND SILVETTI

Rodolfo Machado, principal at the Boston-based architecture firm Machado and Silvetti Associates, was seeking a way to create a sense of place and privacy in the new glass-walled lobby of the Chazen Museum. Located on the campus of the University of Wisconsin in Madison, the 86,000-square-foot building is a freestanding extension of the existing museum designed in 1970 by Harry Weese. The new three-story structure, which opened to the public on October 22, houses galleries but will also serve as a space for performances and events, including both university-sponsored and private soirées in the lobby. “We needed something to help visually define the lobby from the courtyard, and we wanted it to be contemporary and



site-specific,” said Machado.

Machado proposed commissioning a piece by Dutch textile designer Petra Blaisse, whose work had made an impression on him during a visit to the Casa da Musica in Porto, Portugal. Blaisse’s firm Inside Outside created massive knotted curtains that added texture to the OMA-designed space and also acted as a screen for concert hall windows. Machado organized a trip for the Chazen’s director Russell Panczenko to Blaisse’s studio in Amsterdam, and Blaisse in turn visited the site in Madison. When she began to sketch out her vision of a semi-transparent curtain, Panczenko was convinced of the project’s merit as an artwork in its own right. “We have a textile collection here, so we



COURTESY CHAZEN MUSEUM/INSIDE OUTSIDE

were able to use accession funds for it,” said Panczenko, describing how the museum was able to cover the roughly \$250,000 cost of Inside Outside’s installation.

The movable net-like curtain, measuring 65 feet wide and 22 feet tall, entirely covers the lobby’s glass facade when extended. Composed of two layers of fabric, the combination of materials was intended to create a three-dimensional effect, said Peter Niessen, who supervised the project at Inside Outside. “We started by looking at the collections of the Chazen Museum and then emphasized a more scientific approach,” said Niessen of design inspiration drawn from Japanese art and origami as well as fractal geometry. The stiffer layer of light gray felt was

From left to right: Sun filters through the voile and felt curtain by Inside Outside in the Chazen Museum lobby; a motorized track retracts the curtain to create a column-like sculpture; when extended, the curtain offers privacy for evening events in the museum’s lobby.

machine-cut in a cube-like fractal pattern—that evokes an Escher drawing. The felt acts as a frame for a diaphanous layer of voile, which is printed with the same pattern; the two layers and their carefully overlapping patterns are connected at multiple points with a simple cross-stitch. The choice of materials also produces an illusion of transformation: voile, a finely woven polyester, appears transparent when backlit but becomes opaque under direct light, so the curtain offers a sense of openness during the day and privacy at night. Because of its high profile role in the lobby, the piece, which was fabricated in Europe by the German manufacturer Gerriets, was made to meet U.S. flame-proofing codes and standards.

Living up to its designation as art, Blaisse’s piece doesn’t stop at being functional and decorative—it’s performative, too. When the museum wants to encourage passersby to gaze in, the curtain can also retract. Punctured with grommets at the top and suspended from a track, the motorized curtain coils around a thin column of LED lights, creating a glowing cylindrical sheath almost five feet in diameter. The fabric column provides a sculptural and animated presence in the lobby. “It swirls up like a dancer doing a pirouette,” said Panczenko. **MOLLY HEINTZ**

A proposal from Reverse Effect: Renewing Chicago’s Waterways.



COURTESY STUDIO GANG

## GANG CHANGES COURSE

Studio Gang has long partnered with nonprofits and community groups to realize their unconventional designs. For her recent Harvard GSD studio, principal Jeanne Gang partnered with one of the nation’s largest environmental groups, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), to tackle an issue with repercussions across the northern Midwest: separating the South Branch of Chicago River to prevent invasive Asian carp from decimating the Great Lakes. “NRDC told us they were tired of just being against things,” Gang said, in a recent talk at Cooper Union in New York. “The want to be *for* things.” Gang and her GSD

studio investigated the possibilities of returning the river to its natural course, the findings of which have been compiled into a book called *Reverse Effect: Renewing Chicago’s Waterways*. With images as compelling as the one above, it’s easy to see why NRDC thinks partnering with designers is a smart advocacy strategy. For Gang and her students, a region-wide threat called for neighborhood-scale intervention. Such strategic thinking makes architects central players in addressing urgent societal and ecological problems. It never hurts to be essential.

**AGB**

AT DEADLINE

## TAXING PARKING FOR TRANSIT

Mayor Emanuel’s proposed \$2 congestion tax on downtown parking is facing stiff opposition from, you guessed it, the parking lobby. The Parking Industry Labor Management Committee is posting placards in member facilities and handing out flyers opposing the tax. The committee argues the tax will not improve traffic flow and could encourage businesses to relocate to the suburbs. Emanuel believes the tax will foster greater transit ridership and raise an estimated \$28 million annual for CTA improvements. The \$2 tax on parking at garages and lots in the Loop and River North will be added to the existing \$3 tax that goes to the city’s general fund.

## WEESE TO GET HIS DUE

A 13-story tower designed by Harry Weese is likely to receive landmark status. At the request of the residents of 227 East Walton Place, landmarks staff is set to nominate the brick clad building, completed in 1956, as a local landmark. With parallel bands of bay windows running the entire length of the building, the tower, like much of Weese’s work, deviated from modernist orthodoxy as typified by Mies van der Rohe’s nearby Lake Shore Drive apartments, which were completed the same year.

## GENSLER’S GHOST FACADE

The Chicago office of Gensler is working on a new facade for Columbia College’s building at 618 South Michigan Avenue. The 1913 office building originally boasted an ornate terracotta facade, which was replaced with a banal midcentury modern facade in 1958. The new all glass facade will boast a digitally reproduced image of the old facade, creating a ghost-like effect that acknowledges the building’s complicated history.

## MICHIGAN CENTRAL DEPOT REINCARNATED?

Detroit’s most famous ruin, Michigan Central Depot, may soon see new life. Workers for the billionaire Maroun family have been clearing debris out of the 18-story building and a feasibility study for reusing the building is underway. Ann Arbor-based Quinn Evans Architects are among those working on the study. “Structurally, the building is very sound. What’s different now from (previous attempts) is the momentum—the group of people behind this effort as well as the outreach to a wide group,” principal Elisabeth Kibble, told the *Detroit News*. Local politicians, foundation leaders, and officials from the Detroit Institute of the Arts were recently given a tour of the space. New York-based developer Scott Griffin is working with the Marouns to find possible new uses for the building.

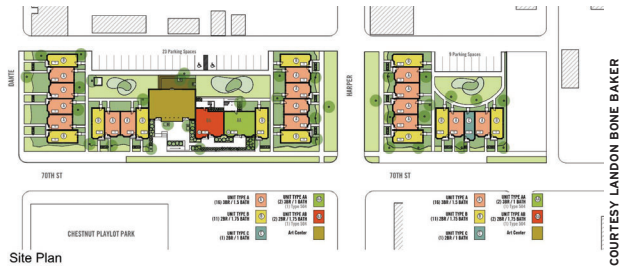


THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 11, 2011

**CHA'S NEW WAY** continued from front page coordination with the CHA. The project calls for 12 units for CHA residents, 11 units of affordable housing for artists, and nine market-rate units, possibly for home ownership. The market rate units will also be targeted for artists. "We want to be able to attract South Side artists—artists of color—who normally have to go to the North Side to make art or make music," Gates said. Four of the original 36 units will be combined to create a cultural center for the complex, which could include workshop, gallery, or studio space, open to all residents.

The Rebuild Foundation, a non-profit that Gates founded, will recruit artists and manage the cultural space. The goal is for resident artists to mentor CHA residents and their children as well as work with schools in the neighborhood.

Gates has been working in the Dorchester neighborhood for almost six years, rehabbing four houses as alternative live-work spaces for artists and community members. Working with neighbors, he is also caring for two vacant lots in the area. "We've been exploring how a cluster of houses could become a cultural amenity," Gates said. "What's



really cool about this project with CHA is that it's really focused on raising people's quality of life. How do we celebrate the lives of people no matter what means they have?"

For the CHA project, Landon Bone Baker will focus on making the midcentury building's shell more energy efficient. The CHA resident units will be conventional three-bedroom units, whereas the artists' units will be left relatively raw so they can be built out by tenants and owners. "It's a chance for us to look at these buildings more spatially, rather than just in terms of the number of rooms, so that if removing some joists and opening up a unit into the space above makes the most sense, we can do that," said Catherine Baker, a principal at LBBA.

For Gates and LBBA, reusing the existing buildings is important. "The full obliteration and recreation of neighborhoods is not natural," Gates says, referring

to wholesale destruction of vast tracts of public housing in Chicago. "How do we work with the existing fabric of a neighborhood and dream what we want the neighborhood to be?" While the buildings themselves are not of particular architectural merit, the townhouse scale and its mature trees relate well to the surrounding neighborhood.

They hope the project could serve as a model for other parts of the city and beyond. While housing authorities around the country have adopted New Urbanist-influenced, mixed-income rebuilding programs, some have struggled to attract market rate residents, and others have failed to develop planned commercial uses.

"This model could be a different way to attract a variety of residents," Baker said. "It's really about enriching the lives of all residents. It's a different notion of amenity."

AGB

COURTESY LANDON BONE BAKER



COURTESY SOM

## UNVEILED

### NANJING RIVERFRONT MASTERPLAN

SOM has been selected by Beijing-based MCCC Real Estate to redesign the Nanjing riverfront, which will include new parks, entertainment districts, and adjacent skyscrapers. The redevelopment will extend two kilometers from the Yangtze River levee to the old city wall. The plan calls for renovating existing rail bridges and an old power station into new cultural and commercial spaces, preserving existing trees, and adding a hotel and other amenities along a renovated shipping canal. The plan also calls for remediating waterways for public access and recreation. "We are delighted to

be working with MCCC Real Estate and the city officials of Nanjing to help move this great historic city to the forefront as an important business, tourism and quality-of-life leader in the New China. We are flattered that they have accepted our concepts for a dramatic new signature riverfront," said Phil Enquist, global city design partner at SOM, in a statement. The developer praised SOM's extensive track record in China, which it said was a decisive factor in selecting the firm. SOM is currently working with various Nanjing agencies to develop the plan and initiate construction of phase one. **AGB**

Architect: SOM  
Client: MCCC Real Estate  
Location: Nanjing, China  
Completion: TBD



COURTESY OSLUND AND ASSOCIATES

**PARSING PEAVEY** continued from front page plaza could seen new life if the city, working in tandem with the Orchestra, moves ahead with a redesign by the noted local landscape architect Tom Oslund. Not everyone is pleased with the process or the plan however. After initially being involved in the redesign, Friedberg now objects to the plan.

Heralded when it opened, Peavey Plaza has deteriorated significantly, and the waterfall-like fountains have stopped working. Critics complain its deeply sunken design is forbidding, even dangerous.

According to Oslund, the new plaza design will keep many concepts of Friedberg's design—including large water elements and a less sunken plaza—and will link it more closely to the city and the adjacent Orchestra Hall. "We've learned a lot about how to design successful public spaces in the last forty years," Oslund said. Oslund would bring the sunken plaza closer to grade and eliminate the boulder-like elements of the Friedberg fountains.

Oslund's comparatively simple, shallow fountain could be drained easily to create a seating area for performance events. An outdoor stage—large enough to accommodate most of the orchestra—would flank the new fountain. The plaza will, in many ways, act as an extension of the Orchestra Hall, which was designed by Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer and is undergoing a renovation by Toronto-based KPMB Architects. The Oslund design will also bring the plaza in line with ADA requirements and make it more visually connected to the surrounding blocks. Additionally, the project will have more sustainable elements like improved storm water management and a water

recycling system for the fountain.

Friedberg and Charles Birnbaum, an expert on modernist landscapes and president of the Cultural Landscape Foundation, were initially advisors to the design team. Friedberg wanted to serve as co-designer with Oslund. But at some point this past summer, they parted ways, and Birnbaum and Friedberg have since been actively campaigning against the redesign. According to Oslund, two proposals were developed, one a strict restoration and one the new proposed design. "The city made it clear they wanted to go in a new direction," he said.

"It's a false decision," Birnbaum said. "We didn't sign up for a restoration project, we signed up for a rehabilitation project." Birnbaum said he believed the retention of fountains should be non-negotiable. "These fountains are the signature elements of the park. They are works of art designed by a landscape architect." Birnbaum and Friedberg both signed an open letter criticizing the process and calling for a faithful "revitalization" of the "good bones" of the plaza. Friedberg said he was not wedded to any particular element, but objected to being shut out of the "closed door process." "Tom Oslund has taken over," he said.

According to Oslund, the project requires approval from the Minneapolis City Council before fundraising for the redesign can begin in earnest. He expects the plaza, and related programming, will be managed by a non-profit conservancy. "The old plaza was not designed for programming or for interaction," Oslund said. "The new Peavey will be dedicated to the performing arts, to the vitality of downtown Minneapolis."

AGB



CHARLES BIRNBAUM/TCLF



DESIGNERS: PERKINS + WILL



As financial markets scramble to realign themselves, a financial trading firm in Chicago has opted to regroup under one roof and provide its staff with a calm, Zen-like working environment. The firm enlisted Perkins + Will to consolidate its IT, administrative, and trading teams into a single office to the west of Merchandise Mart. "Though it is a high-energy, high-performance industry, the client wanted to provide restful, soothing spaces, instead of super high-tech ones," explained Tim Wolfe, Senior Associate at Perkins + Will.

The 75,000-square-foot space was tailored to the client's desire for a calm working environment by employing natural materials and using organic forms throughout the scheme. Entering the second floor 75,000 square foot office, one is confronted with a long, skinny reception area—once a retail space—with an 18 foot-long desk fronting a limestone weeping wall. It is a powerful gateway into what unfolds as a sequence of calm spaces off curvaceous corridors. To the right is a koi carp pond and to the left a Zen garden in the corridor.



"One of the big planning gestures was the large, organically shaped corridors, which act as connectors at the north and south ends," said Wolfe. Along the north corridor there are punched out windows along the perimeter. "The corridors offer a visual access to the light," said Wolfe. Indeed, the architects have tried to bring in more natural light into the space, as in the case of the re-shaped skylight in the reception. As with many interior projects, the designers were limited by elements they inherited in the building. "The regimented grid of columns

was something we had tried to avoid," said Wolfe. "We wanted a free-flowing plan; we couldn't get rid of the columns but we could shape them." Curving upwards, the columns were envisioned as trees extending to the sky, a concealed light source in the ceiling. "It's not just a decorative element," confirmed Wolfe. "It provides around 75 percent of the lighting source for the trading floor." Here they have added curling wooden panels, which peel away from the ceiling to emphasise this effect. To further its unique office design, the traders'

## RESOURCES:

**Bathroom fixtures:**  
Hansgrohe  
[www.hansgrohe.com](http://www.hansgrohe.com)

**Casegoods**  
Tuohy Furniture  
[www.tuohyfurniture.com](http://www.tuohyfurniture.com)

**Lighting:**  
Artemide  
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[www.focalpointlights.com](http://www.focalpointlights.com)

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[www.finelinetile.com](http://www.finelinetile.com)

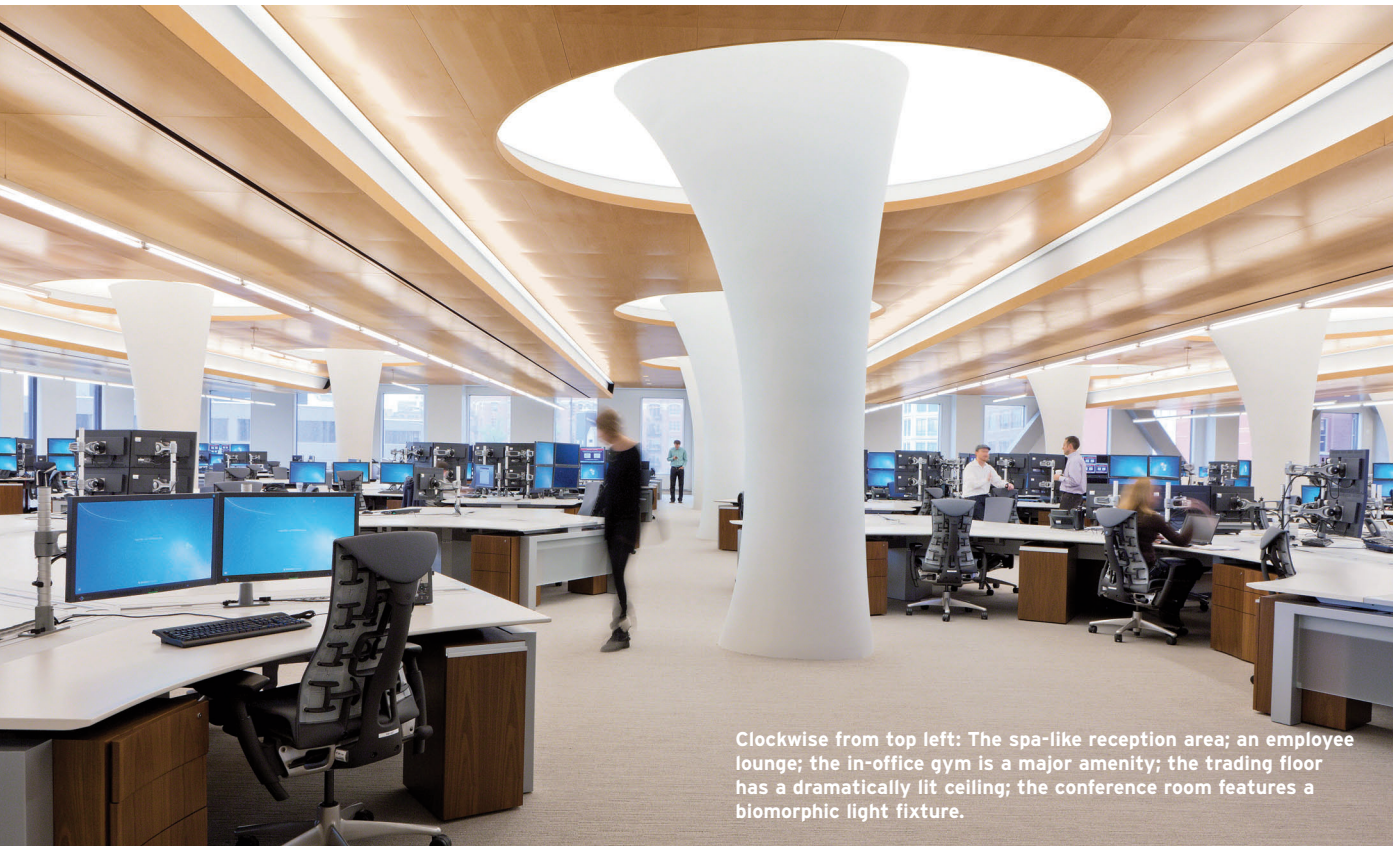
workstations were designed in non-linear shapes that allowed for a more fluid workspace and accommodate up to six colleagues to cluster together. The fifty IT and thirty administrative desks along the south and east, however, are straight, fit for individual tasks.

Branching off the corridors are amenities and conference rooms, spaces that create pockets of tranquility and focused work. Materials play a significant role in creating this effect; walls are made from a concrete and plaster mix, which speaks of durability; while bathrooms use materials like hickory veneer to offer a spa-level of design; and raw steel lacquered panels are used as a way-finding device to the conference rooms. "Everything has been done with a purpose," said Tom Kasznia, account principal at Perkins +Will. Indeed, spaces such as a lounge area where informal meetings and presentations can take place, or workers can just relax, have the generous feel of a private members' club, with Knoll leather chairs and a custom bookcase. The fitness center, which features a series of tube-like lights peppering the ceiling, is also integral to the overarching concept to deliver comfort for employees.

"Light was a main driver in the design," said Wolfe. "We brought in the light fixture in the main conference room early on and as we built a rapport with the client it hit home and drew our design ideas together." The curling outline of the fixture can be seen in the shape of the corridors and similar overhead light features hung in the other conference rooms. "It's not trying to be ostentatious. It's not reckless spending, just creating a comfortable workspace," said Wolfe. "It's the opposite of a mobile work force here. The client actually wants people to be there, using the office during working hours."

MICHELLE LITVIN

GWEN WEBBER



Clockwise from top left: The spa-like reception area; an employee lounge; the in-office gym is a major amenity; the trading floor has a dramatically lit ceiling; the conference room features a biomorphic light fixture.

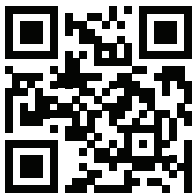


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In Reykjavik, Olafur Eliasson's Harpa Concert Hall facade incorporates ten types of glass. **Below:** More than 800 twelve-sided "quasi bricks" form the building's south face.



# GROWING PANES

Highly customized glass fabrication technologies have never been so in demand, but as architects push for never-before-seen designs at ever lower prices, they are learning that some risks don't pay off. When they do, however, the results achieve a brilliant crystallization of glazing art and science. By Jennifer K. Gorsche

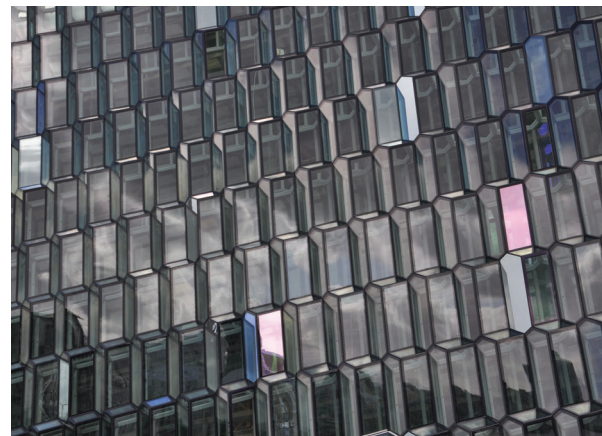
Last spring, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey shattered a dream when it dropped SOM's plan to clad the base of One World Trade Center in prismatic glass. The design element was meant to emanate "splays of color" from the building's podium, but after several years and nearly \$10 million spent on design development, the team found itself without a viable sample. It had paid to build specialized equipment to cut 1-inch-thick, 48-by-159-inch glass panels with a grooved, pointed pattern, then temper the prismatic sheets and laminate them to strong barrier glass.

The project was going to be an exemplar of architecture's best hopes for the future of glass: huge panels with a highly customized, carefully fabricated visual quality that could meet strict safety requirements. But during impact testing, the panels broke into large shards rather than holding together as laminated glass should. The team finally announced the design was too technically difficult to realize.

Or was it? Nathan Munz, managing director of Australia-based glass fabricator Glassform, said that he manufactured a sample of viable prismatic facade glass after being contacted in May 2010 by a project manager with Solera/DCM, the contractor charged with installation of the podium facade. According to Munz, Glassform made the list of approved fabricators for the project, along with Ontario-based Barber Glass

Industries, before Solera's fabrication subcontractor, Las Vegas-based Zetian Systems, gave the fabrication work to Sanxin Glass in Shenzhen, China. Barber, too, was contacted in March 2011 about getting back on board with the project; the company had developed a full-scale mockup for the project in 2009, before going into receivership last year.

When it seemed as if option A had failed, the team "started getting worried



STUDIO OLAFUR ELIASSON





hit the glass and these people freaked, absolutely freaked," remembered Munz. "They said it was amazing." But after Tishman again declined to meet with him, Munz was left to conclude that the construction manager had already decided to abandon the project unless it could be realized with Zetian. When contacted by *AN*'s spokesperson for Tishman declined to comment about the project's glass.

Somewhere in a Pennsylvania warehouse, hundreds of PPG Starphire glass panels that the Port Authority purchased for the project will never see the light of day, but other buildings may soon realize what One World Trade did not. Glassform expects to release a new mass-produced prismatic architectural glass product to the market by the first quarter of 2012.

In spite of the trial and error involved in testing new designs, architects are determined to push the limits of glass technology. In most cases, innovation is more easily achieved in Europe where building teams are likely to negotiate a way to use the best product rather than incorporate more of a lower-priced option. The proximity of several glass-producing nations also fosters an adapt-or-die mentality: Italy depends on exporting its products to France and Germany, forcing them to advance their industry quickly in order to compete with domestic fabricators in those countries.

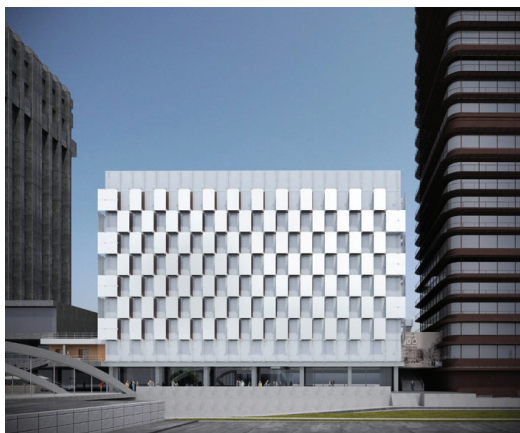
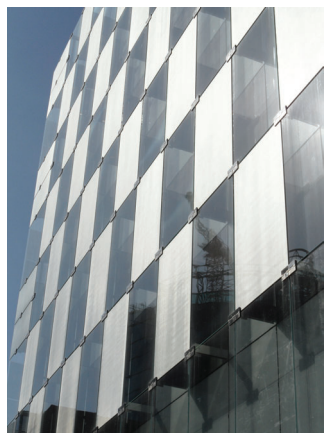
Reykjavik's new Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Center is a prismatic addition to the city's waterfront and a glamorous example of collaboration rather than compromise. Designed by artist Olafur Eliasson with Henning Larsen Architects, the 301,000-square-foot building's south face is composed of 823 "quasi bricks" mimicking crystallized basalt columns commonly found in Iceland. Each brick is a stackable, twelve-sided module of steel and glass that Eliasson and his structural engineers designed using several digital and physical modeling techniques. The north, east, and west facades are flat variations of the south face, as if the bricks have been sliced at an angle. Ten types of glass were used for the skin: yellow, green, and orange dichroic panes reflect their complementary colors, blue, red, and purple; clear, antireflective, and five kinds

of reflective glass are also layered carefully to alternately emphasize depth, solidity, or transparency at different vantage points and light levels. At night, the facade glows with more than 700 LED strips with optics developed with lighting manufacturer Zumtobel. "It has been a process pretty much like doing a painting," said Eliasson in a project presentation video. "When you have the colored glass that has a tendency to stand out, I have put a low-reflection glass next to it in order to give you a sense of it being a volume." The hall's foyer, balconies, and ceiling are oriented to catch light and color. The facade functions, too, standing up to Reykjavik's punishing winter winds and preventing noise from a nearby highway from disturbing concerts inside.

As advancing digital modeling and engineering capabilities allow integration of cutting-edge shapes and sizes, technical material advances are also driving new designs. David Chipperfield's Two Lines pavilion was one of this year's London Design Festival Size + Matter commissions pairing designers with materials and manufacturing processes. Chipperfield created the installation with 28 panes of unframed laminated glass panels embedded with SEFAR Architecture Vision and a DuPont SentryGlas interlayer, a new fabric with a translucent single-sided metal coating. Built in collaboration with Arup, the project's orthogonal glass walls in copper and aluminum interlayers are topped with horizontal glass panels as long as 16 feet with corresponding colored metal connections, giving a glimpse of the shimmering, diffusive quality a facade could achieve with the same materials. According to DuPont, SentryGlas has better adhesion with the fabric mesh than Polyvinyl butyral interlayers, increasing moisture resistance and temperature stability in the long run. The Castellana 79 business and commercial center in Madrid, designed by Rafael de La-Hoz, is one of the first facade projects to be completed with the material.

As decorative patterns, interlayers, and digital printing technologies move from building interiors to facades, understanding the sunlight testing data associated with inks and technical materials is becoming more

**From top:** A rendering of SOM's original prismatic glass podium for One World Trade; the facade of the Castellana 79 business center in Madrid, designed by Rafael de La-Hoz, incorporates aluminum SEFAR Architecture Vision interlayers; David Chipperfield's Two Lines pavilion in London with copper and aluminum glass interlayers.



PEDRO GUARDON



RICHARD BRYANT





COURTESY VIRACON

**Above:** A new facade on the City College of San Francisco's Chinatown campus is printed using Viracon's high-definition silkscreen process.

**Below:** The W Austin Hotel closed for several days after multiple glass balconies shattered.



COURTESY STARWOOD HOTELS

important for architects. "These technologies are relatively new in terms of exteriors," said Bernard Lax, founder of California-based architectural decorative glass manufacturer Pulp Studio. Pulp is the only manufacturer of glass building materials using SentryGlas interlayers, marketed in North America as Chromavison. "We're still on this path of specifications that haven't been realized. You'll find there are things that are not going to be performing three to five years down the road."

As many fabricators try to get into the decorative market, similar fabrication equipment can produce radically different results depending on who is behind the wheel. "In the architectural community, the biggest problem is that designers are very influenced by sales people, but they don't do their due diligence in asking questions about the performance," said Lax.

Pulp recently lost a project comprising nearly 40,000 square feet of gradient sandblasted facade glass to a lower bidder who was ultimately not able to realize the architect's original design intent. Companies operating new digital glass printing equipment without hiring art departments to tightly control image and color quality could be another concern for architects as technology

advances. "It's kind of like buying a limousine but being too cheap to hire the driver," said Lax.

As a series of balcony glass failures in Toronto recently demonstrated, poor specification practices for even simple components can end up costing glass-heavy projects a lot of money. This summer, Ontario-based Lanterra Developments suffered a PR nightmare when glass sheets fell from the balconies of three of its recently completed Toronto condominiums. The fifth, and final, sheet to break fell from the 29<sup>th</sup> floor and hit a pedestrian below. Lanterra replaced the tempered balcony glass in all three projects with laminated glass sheets, which should remain in place even if fractured. The failures raised questions about the source of the project's glass, and whether heat-soaked glass, which has undergone a process that would reveal any inherent flaws, was specified and delivered.

A weeks later, Seattle's NBBJ-designed Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences experienced its third balcony failure and opted to replace its tempered glass balustrades with laminated lites as well. The W Austin Hotel, designed by Andersson-Wise Architects, also closed for several days in June when two falling glass sheets injured four people on the pool deck; three more lites fell in subsequent weeks. Again, the property owner replaced the tempered balcony glass with laminated panels. A report conducted by Curtainwall Design Consulting (CDC) concluded that debris from the building's slab edges had damaged the edges of the tempered glass balconies, which were unprotected by a top railing, causing them to shatter.

Project developers and design teams have not released the sources of the failed glass, but glass fabrication experts speculated that all of the buildings used tempered balcony glass from Chinese manufacturers as a cost-cutting measure. This glass is more likely to contain nickel sulfide inclusions, impurities that can cause breakage unless heat soaking detects imperfections, which have largely been removed from domestic glass manufacturers' products.

Buildings finished as the economy slowed may continue to see problems. "The recession especially has cultivated an ignorance-is-

bliss type of attitude," said Lax. "Most people are so browbeaten by the time they get a project, they don't want to rock the boat. General contractors know the glass guy they hired is going to be a problem, but they can't throw him off because he hasn't done anything wrong yet. These things snowball."

In spite of value engineering at every level, manufacturers remain optimistic about investing in new technologies. Glass supplier and fabricator General Glass International (GGI) is launching a line of acid-etched flooring based on increased demand for that type of application. The company also recently installed a new tempering furnace, allowing them to print and temper a 110-by-170-inch piece of glass (its previous capability was 84 by 168 inches). They will use it to manufacture digitally printed glass for Newark's Terminal B modernization. "It eliminates an obstacle for designers," said Richard Balik, the company's vice president. "Bigger glass eliminates the need for metal and gives them more flexibility."

And pieces are likely to get bigger—GGI's furnace can temper glass up to 110 by 236 inches, but the logistics of cutting, polishing, drilling, and storing a piece of glass that size are still being worked out in the company's plant.

"Architects are pushing us a lot," said Don McCann, director of international sales for glass fabricator Viracon. "They want larger glass and to span larger openings. It's requiring us as a company to get larger fabrication equipment." As a lower-cost alternative to digital printing, the company recently launched Viraspan Design-HD, a high-definition silkscreen process that creates half-tone pixels and gradation within an image or pattern. While the designs they can achieve are beautiful, they are not just decorative: Being able to engineer a larger piece of glass into a building could mean a reduction in other materials and in interior finish-out costs, and incorporating the right frit, low-e coating, or interlayer into facade glass can reduce strain on mechanical systems. "It's a first-cost savings," said McCann. If architects—and their clients—are on board, they can make sure the glass works for itself.

**JENNIFER K. GORSCHKE IS AN'S SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR.**



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# movable walls

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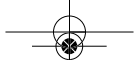
TRENDS

# MOVE IT

The way we work is changing: A team that is relevant to a company one day is obsolete the next, but time and money to redesign office space is scarce; collaboration is essential, except when privacy is even more essential. Sliding doors, modular walls, and dividing systems are offering an answer to the ever-changing needs of office environments. New hardware, bigger doors, and more customizable options allow teams to collaborate, cluster, or create individual work areas with a few

simple moves. New movable wall systems aren't just for looks, either. Large pieces of glass let in more sunlight, increasing natural lighting and decreasing energy consumption in open-plan layouts. In residential and retail, environments, sliding doors are stretching the length of a room, creating more functional space in smaller environments and seamless transitions between indoors and out. JENNIFER K. GORSCHKE finds some clear winners among the newest wall-to-wall innovations.





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1 EXTENDO  
KLEIN  
(SEE PAGE 14)

Klein's new Extendo telescopic sliding door system can create clear openings more than 16 feet wide for office, residential, and hospitality applications. Its synchronized mechanism fits ADA opening force requirements and eliminates floor tracks. It supports exposed and recessed installations and pocket and standard wall designs.

[www.klein-usa.com](http://www.klein-usa.com)

2 INVISIBLE  
SLIDING WALL  
VITROCSA  
(SEE PAGE 14)

Using slender ¾-inch vertical jambs in all units, including very tall double-glazed sliding units, Vitrocsa can create almost invisible movable walls. Manufactured in Switzerland and assembled in the U.S. by Goldbrecht USA Inc., the system has been tested to U.S. AAMA and WDMA standards.

[www.vitrocsaUSA.com](http://www.vitrocsaUSA.com)

3 GENIUS WALL  
SOFT STOP  
KI

KI has designed a soft-stop sliding door option for its Genius movable wall line. The mechanism is activated when a user opens or closes a door, automatically catching the door and gently bringing it to its final position softly and quietly. Designed by Eberhard von Huene & Associates the Genius series incorporates acoustical control and functionality in a range of styles.

[www.ki.com](http://www.ki.com)

4 FILO  
MODERNUS

The new Filo office system from Modernus features a floor-to-ceiling design with no visible metal frame. Modules are delivered pre-hung and are available in custom sizes and finishes. Door panels are rabbeted and coplanar on both sides. Modules incorporate innovative door technology including flush panels, tension bars, concealed hinges, magnetic latch sets, and gaskets.

[www.modernus.com](http://www.modernus.com)

5 GLIDE SLIDING  
PARTITION  
LOFTWALL

Glide is a modular sliding room partition system that is ceiling- or overhead-mounted to a track, available in standard 4-, 6-, and 8-foot widths as well as custom sizes. Glazing options include a range of designs and materials, allowing the system to work for closets, rooms, offices, conference areas, or open spaces in need of flexible partitions.

[www.loftwall.com](http://www.loftwall.com)

6 CLAD-WOOD  
SERIES  
LACANTINA

LaCantina's Clad-Wood series is designed for applications with extreme temperatures and weather in which a wood door or window interior design is desired. Built with a heavy-gauge extruded aluminum-clad exterior and two wood species options, the system can accommodate up to eight folding panels in each direction.

[www.lacantinadoors.com](http://www.lacantinadoors.com)





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7 PK30 SYSTEM  
PK30

PK30 designs glazing framework systems for residential and office applications. Components are extruded from recyclable aluminum alloy with up to 30 percent recycled content. Snap-in glazing stops compatible with any material enable complete installation before glazing and simplify repairs or replacement.

[www.pk30system.com](http://www.pk30system.com)

8 WA67  
NANAWALL

Operable glass wall manufacturer NanaWall has designed the first folding glass wall system that meets Passive House Standards for zero-energy buildings. Able to span openings from 3 to 39 feet, the system is designed with high-performance triple-glazed windows that meet Energy Star requirements in the United States and Canada.

[www.nanawall.com](http://www.nanawall.com)

9 CULINARIA  
BARTELS DOORS

Bartels Doors USA has introduced the Culinary door for residential and commercial dining rooms and kitchens. Inscribed with multilingual culinary terms, the door is available in customizable frame, size, hardware, and hinge options (pictured), and with frosted glass and sliding barn door hardware.

[www.bartelsdoors.com](http://www.bartelsdoors.com)

10 ACME 50  
INSCAPE

Inscape's new Acme 50 seamless glass wall system is a slim-profiled space divider designed to enhance the transparency of private offices and conference rooms. Specialty glass, hardware, and door options are available for the 98 percent-recyclable system.

[www.inscapesolutions.com](http://www.inscapesolutions.com)

11 OTTOBOX  
BURKHARDT LEITNER

Burkhardt Leitner's modular room-in-room Ottobox system can reduce office space conversion costs and create easily movable spaces for meetings, play areas, temporary ad campaigns, or concessions. The aluminum, steel, and glass system is available with casters, custom colors, graphics, and axial dimensions.

[www.burkhardtleitner.de/en](http://www.burkhardtleitner.de/en)

12 STRUCTURAL  
FRAME ELEMENT  
PURINFORM

PURinform has introduced a new structural frame element consisting of a doorstop module and a decorative module, which create a flush, uninterrupted frame unit. The profile is available in satin, brushed stainless steel, or polished chrome finish, in addition to a broad range of colors, surfaces, fittings, and glass panels.

[www.purinform.de](http://www.purinform.de)





HARDWARE

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# HOLD ON

1 MIN COLLECTION  
FTF DESIGN STUDIO

Launched this summer by husband-and-wife design team West Chin and Roseann Repetti, the “min” collection includes four flush-mounted designs: the S min door pull, the L min cabinet pull, the D min sliding double-door pull, and the D2 min (pictured) sliding door pull. Finishes include dark statuary bronze, satin nickel, and powder coated white.

[www.ftfdesignstudio.com](http://www.ftfdesignstudio.com)

2 DAVID CHIPPERFIELD  
DESIGNS  
FSB

Designed for domestic and public spaces alike, David Chipperfield’s new door levers for FSB are supplied with AGL heavy-duty bearings, with standard bearings, or with a fire-safety version depending on the project’s needs. The collection includes a framed door handle with a straight-edged rose. Available in aluminum, stainless steel, or bronze.

[www.fsbna.com](http://www.fsbna.com)

3 SOFTMOVE 80  
HAWA

Hawa’s latest product introduction is the SoftMove 80, a self-closing system designed for integration with the company’s Junior 80 sliding hardware system. It gently decelerates and closes doors based on their size and ideal sliding speed. The hardware is suitable for wood and glass sliding doors and for use on the opening and closing side of the door.

[www.hawa.ch](http://www.hawa.ch)

4 ULTIMA PULLS  
OMNIA

Omnia recently introduced the Ultima line of hardware, a collection designed for a wide range of residential drawer and cabinet applications. The pieces are available in six sizes, ranging from 4 to 18 inches. Made of solid brass, the hardware is available in three finishes: oil-rubbed bronze, satin nickel, and polished chrome.

[www.omniaindustries.com](http://www.omniaindustries.com)

5 MANFRED FRANK  
MICROMASTER HINGES  
INDEX-D

Manfred Frank’s Micromaster hinges are rated for door panels between 440 and 660 pounds with installation of just two hinges. They are suitable for most swinging panel-mounting applications including tall and wide panels. A patented 3-D, self-locking technology allows the hinge to be adjusted by one person with a small tool.

[www.index-d.com](http://www.index-d.com)

6 SERIES BESS H 1045  
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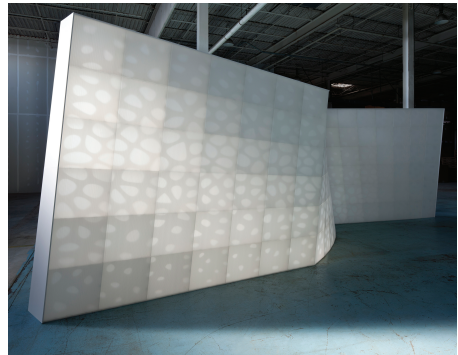
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NOVEMBER

**FRIDAY 11  
LECTURE**  
**Ed Dimendberg**  
6:00 p.m.  
Gallery 1100 A+A  
845 West Harrison St.  
The School of Architecture  
University of Illinois Chicago  
Chicago  
www.arch.uic.edu

**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Holiday Thorne:**  
**Miniature Rooms**  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
11 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
www.artic.edu

**SATURDAY 12  
EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Cathy Wilkes**  
Carnegie Museum of Art  
4400 Forbes Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA  
www.cmoa.org

**FILM**  
**Citizen Architect:**  
**Samuel Mockbee and the  
Spirit of the Rural Studio**  
(Sam Wainwright Douglas,  
2010), 90 min.  
2:30 p.m.  
Carnegie Museum of  
Art Theater  
4400 Forbes Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA  
www.cmoa.org

**MONDAY 14  
LECTURE**  
**Stanley Tigerman**  
5:30 p.m.  
AIA Chicago  
35 East Wacker Dr.  
Chicago  
www.aiachicago.org

**Roger Sherman**  
6:00 p.m.  
Gallery 1100 A+A  
845 West Harrison St.  
The School of Architecture  
University of Illinois Chicago  
Chicago  
www.arch.uic.edu

**TUESDAY 15  
EVENT**  
**Technology &  
Transformation:**  
**Trends Impacting  
Education**  
12:00 p.m.  
AIA Chicago  
35 East Wacker Dr.  
Chicago  
www.aiachicago.org

**WEDNESDAY 16  
LECTURE**  
**Charles F. Blois**  
12:15 p.m.  
Lecture Hall Gallery  
Chicago Architecture  
Foundation  
224 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
caf.architecture.org

**WORKSHOP**  
**LED Outdoor  
Lighting Workshop**  
2:00 p.m.  
Lighting & Electrical Institute  
1975 Noble Rd.  
Cleveland, OH  
www.architectureweek.com

**FILM**  
**Sneak Preview of Chicago's  
Loop: A New Walking Tour**  
**Film Screening and discussion  
with Geoffrey Baer**  
6:00 p.m.  
Lecture Hall Gallery  
Chicago Architecture  
Foundation  
224 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
caf.architecture.org

**THURSDAY 17  
LECTURE**  
**John McKevitt: Reducing  
Embodied Energy In Masonry  
Construction**  
12:00 p.m.  
AIA Chicago  
35 East Wacker Dr., Chicago  
www.aiachicago.org

**FRIDAY 18  
EVENT**  
**After Dark, Betrand Goldberg:**  
**Architecture of Invention**  
9:00 p.m.  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
11 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
www.artic.edu

**SATURDAY 19  
EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**The Hanukkah Lamp:  
Modernist Style and  
Jewish Experience**  
Loyola University Museum  
of Art  
820 North Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
www.luc.edu

**SUNDAY 27  
EXHIBITION CLOSING**  
**Eija-Liisa Ahtila:**  
**The House**  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
11 South Michigan Ave.  
Chicago  
www.artic.edu

**MONDAY 28  
LECTURE**  
**Richard Sennett**  
6:00 p.m.  
Carnegie Library Lecture Hall  
Carnegie Mellon University  
School of Architecture  
201 College of Fine Arts  
Pittsburgh, PA  
www.cmu.edu/architecture

**DECEMBER**  
**FRIDAY 2**  
**EXHIBITION OPENING**  
**Art + Design**  
Las Manos Gallery  
5220 North Clark St.  
Chicago  
www.lasmanosgallery.com



**JÜRGEN MAYER H.: WIRRWARR**  
The Art Institute of Chicago  
111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago  
Through January 22, 2012

While the Berlin-based architect Jürgen Mayer H. is known for his highly sculptural, honeycomb-like buildings, such as the Metropal Parasol in Seville or the the Court of Justice in Hasselt, Belgium (above), one of his quirky obsessions is not as widely known: a fascination with secret codes and numbers encrypted into patterns. Used by institutions such as banks to ensure that sensitive information such as PINs and passwords are only visible to the recipient, these intricately patterned data sheets are largely unexamined. To Jürgen Mayer H., however, this visual expression of our fear of exposure and desire for protection is fascinating and relevant to architecture. For more than a decade, the architect has been collecting hundreds of envelopes lined with patterns and codes designed to encrypt the privacy of the contents, some dating even back to 1913. Part of this collection has even appeared in his designs, like his 2008 Venice Biennale installation, *Pretext/Vorwand*, the Data tile series he designed for Bisazza mosaics, and the Metropal Parasol, whose form was machine-milled according to numerical code. One hundred reprints of Mayer H.'s collection, which was originally published by Hatje Cantz Verlag, will be on view at Wirrwarr ("chaos" in German). While heavily loaded, the patterns themselves are quite beautiful in their own right.

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## PAPER TIGER

Ceci n'est pas une reverie:  
The Architecture of Stanley Tigerman  
Yale School of Architecture Gallery  
180 York Street, New Haven, CT  
Closed November 4

What does it say about an architect's career if his best-known work, the largest image in a half-century retrospective, is a photo-collage of Mies van der Rohe's 1956 Crown Hall, sinking slowly beneath the waters of Lake Michigan? I'll tell you what I think it says about Stanley Tigerman: He's better as a satirist than as an architect. And it isn't only me who might have preferred a show titled, "The Provocations of Stanley Tigerman."

Reading curator Emanuel Petit's opening

text about how Tigerman (who graduated from Yale in 1961, and has practiced in Chicago ever since) embraces "the spiritual and ethical value of ambivalence" and "resist[s] the traditional aesthete's credo of purging art of its disturbances," I rolled my eyes at Petit's humorless, academicizing prose, but thought, *So far, so good*. Here we are in the territory of the Yale-educated post-modernists, who learned from Paul Rudolph (there's some lovely Rudolphian and Kahnian

Tigerman's photo-collage of Mies' Crown Hall.

early work by Tigerman in the section "Yaleiana") and then headed West. That Tigerman was already looking beyond the reigning architecture gods is made clear by the inclusion of a set of his early 1960s experiments in Op Art.

One feels tremendous sympathy for the rage to get out of the long shadow of Mies, which Tigerman channeled into exhibitions and publications with a sort of *Salon des Refusés* through The Chicago Seven. You see how cheeky (literally) Tigerman's cartoons were, with their filigree of naked putti. I get the joy inherent in designing a work like the 1976–77 Labadie House, shown here in exquisite large-scale cutaway axonometric drawings, with its cascades of Corbusian piano-curves, its repeated spiral stairs. There's something tender about this 1970s work. When's the last time you visited an architecture exhibit with *no photographs*? It may be hard to tell the built from the unbuilt, but it is an effective statement about self-representation.

But is it the Labadie house I would want to live in? No. It is a provocation as a house, Richard Meier with a stutter, mannerist in the extreme. It is the Vanna Venturi House ten years later, richer in execution but still architecture with more head than heart. The shadow of Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown hangs over the exhibition, and I feel the same way about them as I do about Tigerman: respect the mind, feel nothing for the built work. More importantly, is it a

house with followers? I don't think so.

Petit has divided the show into fancifully-named sections (even more fancifully designated with cartoony clouds in a very post-modern blue): "Drift" and "Humor," "Allegory" and "Death." But most of the buildings could easily come under the category "Allegory," which makes them seem like verbal stunts. There's Anti-Cruelty Society Addition (1979) with a dog face. The Daisy House (1976–78) that looks like private parts in plan. And to show that he continues to design in this way, the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center (2000) with a dark building through which you descend, a light building through which you ascend. It may be effective as an exhibition but seems too literal to be good, long-lasting architecture.

This sounds dismissive. I was hoping the exhibition would give me an image from Tigerman's own architecture I could admire, and prove his importance. In an accompanying video Yale Dean Robert A.M. Stern says of Tigerman, "One of the best parts of Stanley is he's outrageous." But the outrages all feel past. Already the in-jokes and references from the 1970s are becoming hard to decipher, and soon the provocations and tiffs will also be history. Architecture needs shows like this so we can annotate the jokes before their meaning is gone, but that's a narrow path to tread. It has nothing of the cheekiness and energy of the original sinking of Crown Hall.

ALEXANDRA LANGE IS A NEW YORK-BASED ARCHITECTURE CRITIC.

## Iron-Clad Voices

Soviet Modernism: 1955–1985, An Anthology  
Felix Novikov and Vladimir Belogolovsky  
Tatlin, \$80

Being at the crossroads or as Russians would say, "*na rasputie*," is what seems to be the recurrent symptom of Russian architecture. The constant search for identity often takes a larger cultural meaning when the entire nation finds itself lost in an ambiguity of what Russian style is, and in the end always turning West in the search for answers. The cultural period described in *Soviet Modernism: 1955–1985* by Felix Novikov and Vladimir Belogolovsky, represents what seems to be one of such turning points in the history of Russian architecture, a period often described as belated modernism, a mere copy of the Western modernist movement. However, both authors quickly prove that it was also a time for great ingenuity and independence of ideas.

The publication, structured as a catalog or "album" in Novikov's words, presents a wide-ranging view into an area of Soviet architecture largely unknown and under-represented, a hand-selected collection of one hundred projects framed by two essays (with English translations). One is an introduction,

a personal account by Novikov, a direct eye-witness to the changing architectural scene of the 1960s. He shares his experiences working as an architect during the Soviet Union's transition from Stalin's reign to Khrushchev's "thaw," and ultimately to the collapse of the system. The concluding essay by Belogolovsky, an architect and critic of the younger generation, summarizes the reader's experience of the well-annotated catalog of images, suggesting the vast undiscovered potential of this architectural period "now only beginning to be revealed" as he writes.

Spanning the 1950's to the 1980's (with a few examples of architecture from the 1990s), the catalog includes a broad range of modernist projects. Although many of them have never been published in the West, their architectural expression comes as no surprise to those familiar with the aesthetic of modernism. Large scale urban, institutional, residential, or public buildings, in their monumental abstraction are related to their western counterparts at first sight. What makes them remarkable however, is their

inevitable role as signifiers of a radical political and cultural shift within the Soviet Union when Khrushchev had denounced Stalin's Socialist realism as wasteful, expensive, and overindulgent, abandoning it in favor of a rational, economic, and broad-based industrialization of design and construction. According to Novikov, "Even the great Corbusier himself would sign such a directive in principle."

Overnight, the new leader set the stage for the Soviets' own take on modernism, even though it was not entirely independent of the West. Soviet architects went to the United States and Europe to study architectural, material, and technological developments that took place outside the Iron Curtain. But then, those same architects continually strived to develop an individual style of their own. Soon after, driven by a severe housing shortage, the newly adopted Soviet modernist movement was forced to produce entire new cities, changing the socialist urban landscape forever. What is of interest here, as Belogolovsky points out, is that many programmatic types, such as private houses, corporate headquarters, and banks, to name just a few, did not exist in the Soviet Union, so the Soviet architects were deprived of what was a rich field of experimentation for their western counterparts. Novikov argues that instead of employing the non-existent potential of programmatic variety, many Soviet modernist

projects derived their unique and radical expressiveness from the vast country's multi-national culture and the large diversity of climates and landscapes. This helped shape some of the stylistic differences, together with the inevitable return to constructivism that remains an undeniable root at least for some of the projects presented in the catalog.

Such historical framing makes the publication especially worthwhile as a visual collection of truly outstanding and radical architecture. Two such examples are the Ministry of Highways building in Tbilisi, Georgia of 1977 and the Sanatorium Druzhba in Yalta, Ukraine of 1985. Both could easily qualify as iconic buildings even today and may have served as inspi-

Café Blue Domes in Tachkent Uzbekistan.

ration for many projects designed in the West. Soviet Modernism, although occasionally making inevitable comparisons to the West, demonstrates the independence and strength of Soviet architecture developed under enormous constraints, but in debt to great political ambitions. One can only hope that in the future, Soviet modernism can be given its own place, and perhaps, even name in history, entirely independent of the West.

MASHA PANTELEYEVA IS WRITING A PH.D ON POSTWAR SOVIET ARCHITECTURE AT THE YALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

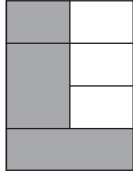


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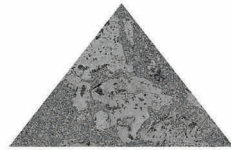
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CATHERINE GAVIN

# Step Inside Detroit's Ghost Steamship

Detroit is home to countless ruins, but the floating hulk of the S.S. Columbia, docked in Ecorse, Michigan, stands out among the roster of idled factories and abandoned houses. The oldest remaining steam passenger vessel in the country, the Columbia was built in 1902 with an innovative

structural design by Frank E. Kirby and opulent interiors by Louis O. Keil. The steel and wood ship crisscrossed the Detroit River headed for Boblo Island in Ontario for 89 years. Despite insensitive renovations and 20 years of neglect, the grand ballroom, bandstand, mahogany

and oak staircases, mahogany paneled walls with etched leaded-glass lights, and ceiling frescos all remain under the layers of paint. The S.S. Columbia Project is charged with the restoration, and a plan is afloat to put the boat back in service in New York's Hudson Valley

([www.sscolumbia.org](http://www.sscolumbia.org)). Detroiters shouldn't despair though. Another steam ship—the S.S. St. Claire also docked nearby—may be returned to Detroit's waterways. **CATHERINE GAVIN**

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**Key Note Speaker:**  
**Patrik Schumacher**  
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